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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

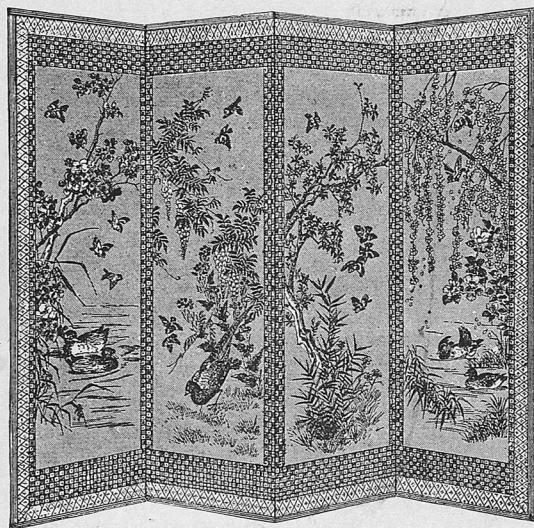
A. A. VANTINE & CO.

AMONGST the novelties recently imported by Messrs. Vantine & Company is a line of Shifu curtains. The material is a mixture of jute and cotton, and is to be had in all colors. A pair of curtains on exhibition are of a mottled red color, which is caused by the action of the dye on the different materials employed in the manufacture of the fabric. These curtains are elaborately embroidered in floss silk and gilt thread, and are quite moderate in price. The material also comes in the plain form, 36 inches wide.

Another novel material is cotton crepe, gold painted or stamped with beautiful floral designs in the Japanese style. Draperies made of this unique and showy material are known as Hechima curtains. They measure three by ten and one-half feet, and can be simply shirred on rods, or suspended from rings to poles. The fabric known as Tsumugi is a very soft Japanese cotton fabric, well adapted for draperies. There is also a beautiful silk pongee fabric, decorated with gold thread embroidery.

In table covers kobe crepe presents a rough, brilliant finish, extremely suitable for hand-embroidered effects, which are deftly done in gilt metal thread. These table covers come in all the soft shades.

A novel material is a metal netting, which is knotted into a great variety of patterns. It is of Japanese manufacture and can be cut anywhere without raveling the netting. It is of all



A Japanese Folding Screen.

grades of fineness, from a strong fish net caliber down to the finest hair-like mesh, and it is used to decorate covers for foot-stools, mantel lambrequins, lamp shades, etc.

It has hitherto been impossible to obtain the gorgeous satin hand-embroidered Japanese portières at a less cost than one hundred and fifty dollars a pair, but Messrs. Vantine & Co. have, after considerable effort, succeeded in getting the Japanese to manufacture a low-priced satin portière, which has all the sumptuous effects of the most costly fabrics, and which can be sold for sixty-five dollars a pair. There is on exhibition some old gold satin portières, gorgeously embroidered in Japanese silk, with the flowers, birds and landscape effects enclosed in richly embroidered borders. No two of the patterns are alike, and the effect is simply magnificent.

In view of the great demand at present for rich, low-toned colors in decorative fabrics, the firm have made a practice for years past of hunting up all kinds of Japanese woven goods, whether the old time robes of priests and nobles, or altar cloths and temple draperies. They have succeeded in collecting a vast quantity of odds and ends of Japanese silk fabrics, many of which are extremely old, and are all the more valued on that account because of their exquisite and beautiful colorings. No

modern dyer can hope to rival by any combination of colors the exquisite tints of yellow, red, orange, and other shades that are presented by these unique remnants. There is an altar cloth exhibited which was originally a brilliant yellow, but which is now toned down to an indescribably old yellow hue that is extremely rich and satisfying to the eye. Ladies purchase quantities of these fabrics for making unique cushions and for mantel and easel draperies.

In Japanese brocades there are a great many designs in which gold threads are interwoven. There is a white and gold fabric, which is a beautiful material for upholstering white and gold furniture. In many of the Japanese figured silks a certain portion of the design is embroidered with gold threads by hand, after the material has left the loom, and unlimited quantities of these materials can be purchased with this hand embroidery superadded to the original fabric. Their line of figured silks for drapery purposes is simply inexhaustible. Not only textile fabrics, but also bronzes and Japanese pottery are imported by this firm in large quantities. Some of the larger pieces of Japanese bronze work, with the figure of Buddha seated on the lotus, or with a dragon encircling a vase, lend a noble and majestic air to an apartment thus decorated, and such pieces of metal art work are very highly prized by connoisseurs. The vase is usually cast in solid bronze, and that part of the ornamentation in low relief taking the form of trees with branches covered with flowers, birds and other animals is elaborately chiseled out of the solid bronze by the hands of the workman, so that the Japanese vase is at once the joint product of the founder and sculptor in metal.

No less beautiful are the curiously carved ivories, and there are two enormous segments of elephants' tusks, which are covered with figures representing the festival of the New Year in the olden time. Of course the Japanese have adopted the Western almanac, and their New Year falls upon the first of January, like our own, but not many years ago their New Year fell upon a different date and was attended with imposing ceremonies.

There are also exhibited a number of beautiful Chinese carved cabinets in teak wood and ebony, many of them inlaid with mother-of-pearl. These old Chinese carvings are in their way quite as beautiful as the ivory carvings of the Japanese. There is a large line of beautiful Japanese screens recently imported, one of which we illustrate, and there is a great business being done at present in bead and rice portières, which are charming draperies for hot weather, and at all seasons lend a unique grace to the appointments of a doorway or window.

DECORATIVE FURS.



NO modern interior, however magnificent in its appointments, is considered finished without the use of fur rugs, which are not only interesting from a mere decorative point of view, but the animal whose skin is thus utilized has a history of its own, which imparts a rare charm to the rug itself. When we see a tawny yellow lion skin rug, with the black tuft at the end of the tail that distinguishes the lion from all other members of the cat family, we see in imagination the magnificent lion, with his head proudly erect, as though he were still king of the forest; and the skin of the polar bear recalls

the desolate regions within the arctic circle and the perpetual ice amongst which the animal dwells.

Every country, from the frigid zone to the tropics, is represented in the fashionable rugs and robes that are so largely used nowadays in the best class of houses, some of which show the natural color of the furs, while in other cases the pelts are dyed a totally different color to that which characterized the animal when alive. In some cases the skin of the animal is used alone in its original outline, and in other cases a second fur is introduced as a trimming to define the animal's pelt, and